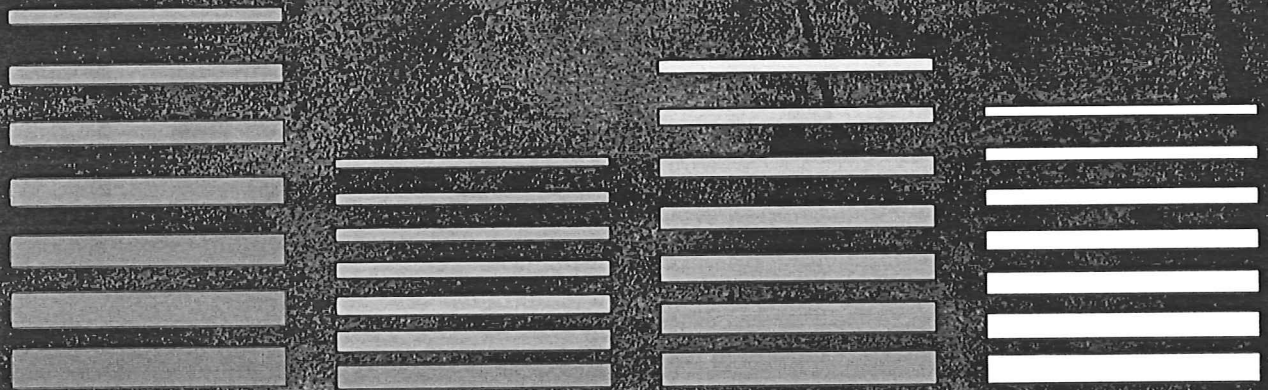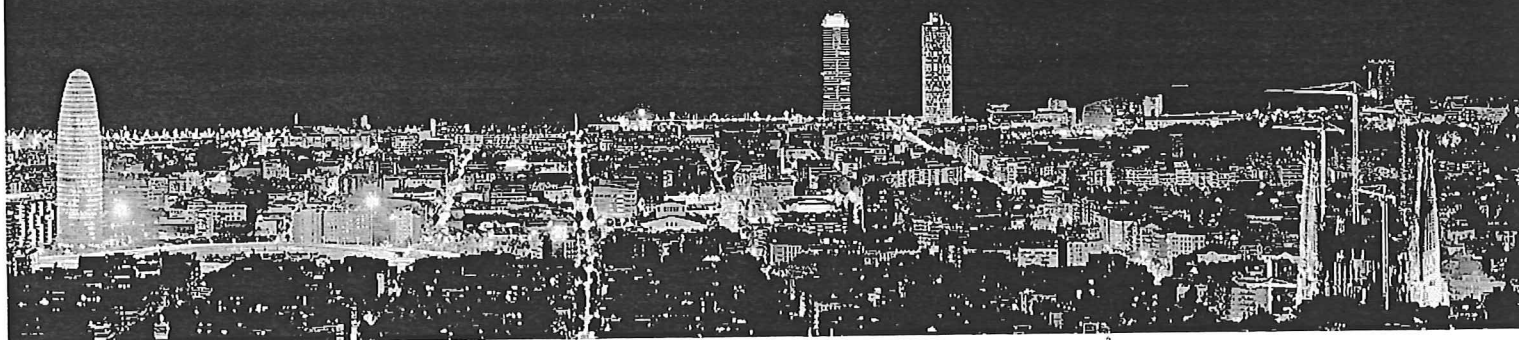# EDULEARN 15

7TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON EDUCATION AND NEW LEARNING
TECHNOLOGIES

BARCELONA (SPAIN)
6TH - 8TH OF JULY, 2015

CONFERENCE

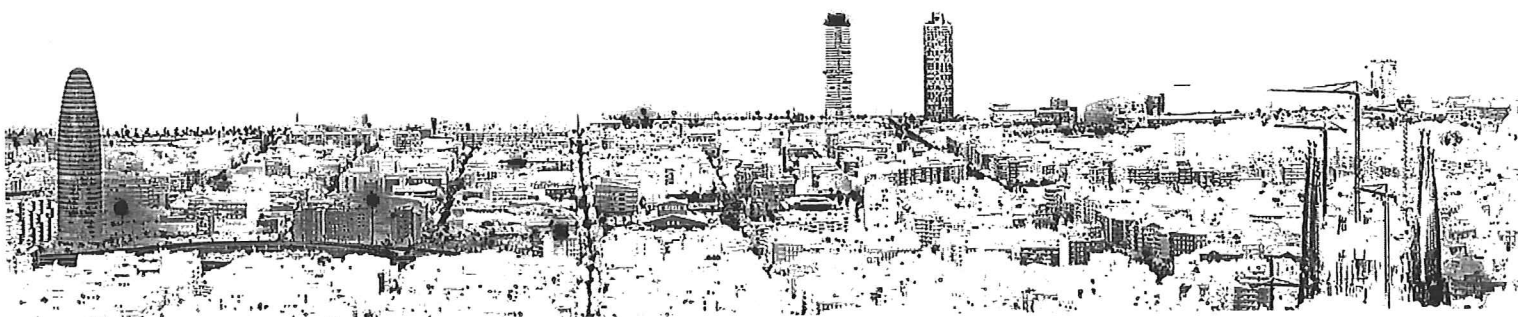# PROCEEDINGS

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EDULEARN15 Proceedings
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WELCOME INTRODUCTION

Dear EDULEARN15 participants,

We are delighted to welcome you all to the 7th annual International Conference on Education and New Learning Technologies.

After seven years, EDULEARN has become a reference event for lecturers and researchers from all over the world. It is the ideal place to be inspired by innovative ideas, different educational perspectives and to establish international partnerships.

Above all, we wish to thank all delegates who have participated, sharing their unique experiences and projects. More than 600 attendees from 80 different countries have contributed to the program, making EDULEARN15 a multidisciplinary and truly international conference.

We hope that your participation at this conference will provide you with an opportunity to open your minds to new educational innovations, to share your knowledge with other experts, and to be an active part of the *connection between technology and education.*

Thank you very much for your valuable contribution to EDULEARN15!

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THE MODEL OF GETTING UNCONFIDENT STUDENTS TO SPEAK UP

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Abstract

Speaking is the skill that most Thai students lack of opportunity to use because English is not used as the official language in Thailand. However; in all levels of education here, speaking is still added in all English subjects. For the university level, students are trained to speak English in several ways based on the subject they are studying. This study aims to encourage the unconfident freshmen in Faculty of Management Science to be ready to practice speaking skills through various activities. There are two main focuses to be presented on this paper. The first one is the appropriate methods to get students to speak up which was presented in the model form and the other one is students' perceptions towards this model. The results of this study would be guidelines for teachers who are teaching speaking skills for unconfident students in university level. And, it is also beneficial for the researcher to know her students' perceptions towards her teaching methods. So, this would allow her to improve her speaking lesson then.

Keywords: Unconfident students, students' perceptions, teaching speaking skills, ECRIF framework.

1 INTRODUCTION

General English is the subject that all Thai tertiary students have to study in the first year. The purposes of this kind of subject are probably to train students to be able to use English in their daily life covering four skills; reading, listening, speaking, and writing and to train students strengthen their communication skills in English. Some universities might set this kind of subject into the skills-based or communicative-based depending on the curriculum descriptions.

In Faculty Management Science, Silpakorn University, the general English courses are set into the integrated skills based. All freshmen students are asked to learn English covering four skills; reading, listening, speaking, and writing but each course is designed by the content-based. So, students will have more opportunities to strengthen their English language skills as well as communicative ones through different activities in classroom.

In the researcher's class, teaching speaking seems to be the main problem for her when she found that most of her students were really shy to speak up. Most of them kept quiet and said that they were not confident to speak English even in front of her or their friends who are from the same major. From that situation, she started finding the ways to go over this situation by interview her students why they were not confident to speak up. The results showed that they were afraid to lose their face if they spoke English not properly. Pronunciation and grammar are two main things that they were worried about. So, it would be better for them if they understand those things clearly before speaking up.

From the mentioned results, the researcher decided to reconsider her teaching speaking strategies for the rest periods of her class. Her teaching strategies were reviewed and written into the model to see the whole process. Along the use of this model, she also noticed that some students showed some improvements. However, to see the feedback and find the ways to improve the model, she decided to ask her students to assess her model. Then she found some guidelines at last.

The model of getting her unconfident students to speak up, her students' perceptions towards this model and the recommended model of getting her unconfident students to speak up are presented in this paper. These would be useful for any teachers who face the same situation as her. And, it would also be guidelines for the researcher to develop her teaching speaking strategies.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

In English language classroom, teachers probably use different teaching approaches to teach their students to be able to use the target language in their classroom. In this study, the researcher also has tried an approach in her classroom to teach the unconfident students to speak English. In this

part, ECRIF framework was the theoretical foundation used in her class and her research. This theoretical foundation was considered to state her research framework as well as her research methodology.

2.1 ECRIF framework

ECRIF stands for Encounter, Clarify, Remember, Internalize, and Fluency. Josh Kurzweil and Mary Scholl developed this framework between 2004 and 2005 as they wrote the book Understanding Teaching through Learning for McGraw-Hill and SIT, the School for International Training. They also provide the useful information about their framework on their website, www.ecrif.com. They presented that this framework has been applied on many SIT TESOL Certificate Courses as well as in variety of workshops given for government and non-governmental organizations. It focuses on learning process rather than what teacher is doing during the lesson. By this concept, activities and contents were probably planned by the teacher to facilitate students' learning in the principled way.

Kurzweil and Scholl suggested three main uses of ECRIF framework on their website that it can be used;

- To plan lessons and adapt course book materials = (reflecting for action)
- To assess where students are in their learning process during a lesson = (reflecting action)
- To reflect on student learning after a lesson = (reflecting on action)

Each stage of this framework is presented as following:

- *Encounter;* it is the first time that students activate new material or information.
- *Clarify;* it is something that happens inside the students; they are able to determine what they have learned. It means they understand what they have activated at the encounter stage well.
- *Remember;* it is the first step that students are trained to install things they have clarified into their memory. However, they may need to review those things on the support material and working on some activities such as repetition, drilling, and etc.
- *Internalize;* it is the time that students are trained to install things they have remembered into the long-term memory. This stage, students are offered choices to use information they have remembered. So, it will be less control comparing with the remembering stage.
- *Fluency;* this stage, it is the time that students can test their internalized knowledge freely. They are allowed to produce the target language creatively through real situations tasks.

However, Kurzweil and Scholl stated that this framework is not a linear one, so it can be used in different directions of stages based on the classroom context.

At the present, ECRIF has one of the frameworks has been used widely in English language classes. It was promoted by experts and English language teachers all over the world. Magdalena (2014) was the teacher who presented the implications of ECRIF framework based on her teaching experiences on the workshop in International Conference for Teachers of English, Costa Rica, 2014 that her students struggles the most in learning to speak English and ECRIF help her to help their students.

In this study, the ECRIF framework was also adapted in teaching process for the speaking lessons, and the results after using this framework seemed to be positive in the eyes of the researcher and her students. However, for the further teaching development; she decided to sum up the whole stages of her teaching based on this framework into the model and let her students to assess and recommend any other ideas for improving her model.

3 OBJECTIVES

This research aimed to assess the model of teaching speaking for unconfident students and investigate students' perception towards that model. The results of this study would be some implications of teaching speaking skills by applying the ECRIF framework in the teaching process and it would be guidelines for the researcher to develop her teaching in the future classes.

4   METHODOLOGY

4.1   Participants

There were ten participants for this study. All of them were first year students who studied English Skills Development Course in the same section. Six students out of ten had got grade F, and the four rests of them got grade D from the previous English course. And they were really difficult to speak English.

4.2   Research instruments

ECRIF framework, focus group interview, questionnaires, and observations were used to collect data along the study.

4.3   Data collection

The data collection was consisted of two main steps below.

Step 1: Doing focus group interview

Students were asked to talk about English speaking after the researcher noticed that some of her students were really difficult to speak up. The conversation among talking was recoded to be transcribed later for analyzing data.

Step 2: Assessing the model of getting students to speak up and investigating students' perception towards the model

The researcher found that ECRIF framework seems to be the better tool which she could adapt in her speaking lessons for these students. So, the teaching plans were designed by the researcher and they were used in her classroom along the course.

At the end of the course, all those plans used in the classroom were summarized into the model. Then, she allowed her students see the whole process used in their speaking lessons. At this stage, students were asked to assess this model whether each step was appropriate or not. And to be the clearer opinions, these students were also asked to give some comments in each stages of the teaching model. At this assessment, questionnaires with the model used in the speaking lessons were passed to students for assessing the model and expressing their perceptions towards this teaching process.

4.4   Data analysis

1. The recording from the focus group interview was transcribed and saved in Microsoft Excel program. Then, all responses were categorised into the appropriate themes to find the frequently responses.

2. All questionnaires were designed as the open-ended question and check list form. All responses were transcribed and saved in Microsoft Excel. Then, the data was read and encoded into the formats. All encoded data was categorised into the salient themes.

3. The categorised data were used as the information to write the recommended model of getting unconfident students to speak up and to summarise students' perception towards the model used in their speaking lessons.

5   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There are three main parts of the results for this research presented in this part. The first part consists of the results from the focus group interview about the unconfident students. The second one is the model of getting unconfident students to speak up used in speaking lessons and students' perception towards this model. The last one is the recommended model of getting unconfident students to speak up for the future speaking lessons. These three parts are presented together with the discussion below.

5.1 The unconfident students

After finishing the first lesson of speaking, the researcher noticed that most of her students were really difficult to speak English. So, she designed to look for students who were exactly difficult at that ability. The focus group interview was adapted for seeking those students. And then, she finally found that there were 10 students who mentioned the same thing that they were unconfident to speak up. However, there are some different reasons behind why they were unconfident to speak English.

5.1.1 The unclear conversation

Most of these students stated that they did not understand the conversation they were assigned to practice in the speaking lesson. They were difficult to imagine the situation and they did not get them into the conversation at all. There are two sample extracts which were highlighted below.

"I didn't understand what people were saying in the conversation, so I just tried to remember and spoke up in front of the teacher. And it didn't go well because I was saying what I didn't understand well." [Student A]

"The conversation is too difficult to understand, I couldn't imagine the clearer picture. So, it's difficult to produce in my own way." [Student B]

5.1.2 The anxiety about pronunciation and grammar used in the conversation

The anxiety about pronunciation and grammar were two main things which these students were really worried. Most of them were afraid to speak English if they were not sure about those things. There are also two sample extracts which were highlighted in this part below.

"I was not confident to speak English because I didn't know how to speak out correctly." [Student A]

"I was not sure about the grammatical points I used in the conversation whether it is right or wrong. I was really worried about that. And, that made me felt too excited to speak." [Student B]

The main results about the unconfident students from the focus group interview were perfectly meaningful for the researcher. So, she decided to plan and arrange her better teaching process based on these results. The ECRIF framework was finally applied in her teaching plans by realizing with these results.

5.2 The model of getting unconfident students to speak up and students' perceptions towards the model

The model of getting students to speak up was adapted based on the ECRIF framework and the results from the focus group interview. This model was specially designed for teaching unconfident students to speaking English. Along this study, it was used for teaching speaking skills in three different topics. And, at the end of the last topic, ten unconfident students were asked to do the questionnaire to assess this model and express their perception towards the model. This model is firstly presented in this part as the figure 1 and students' perception is presented divided into each stage of the model under the figure 1.

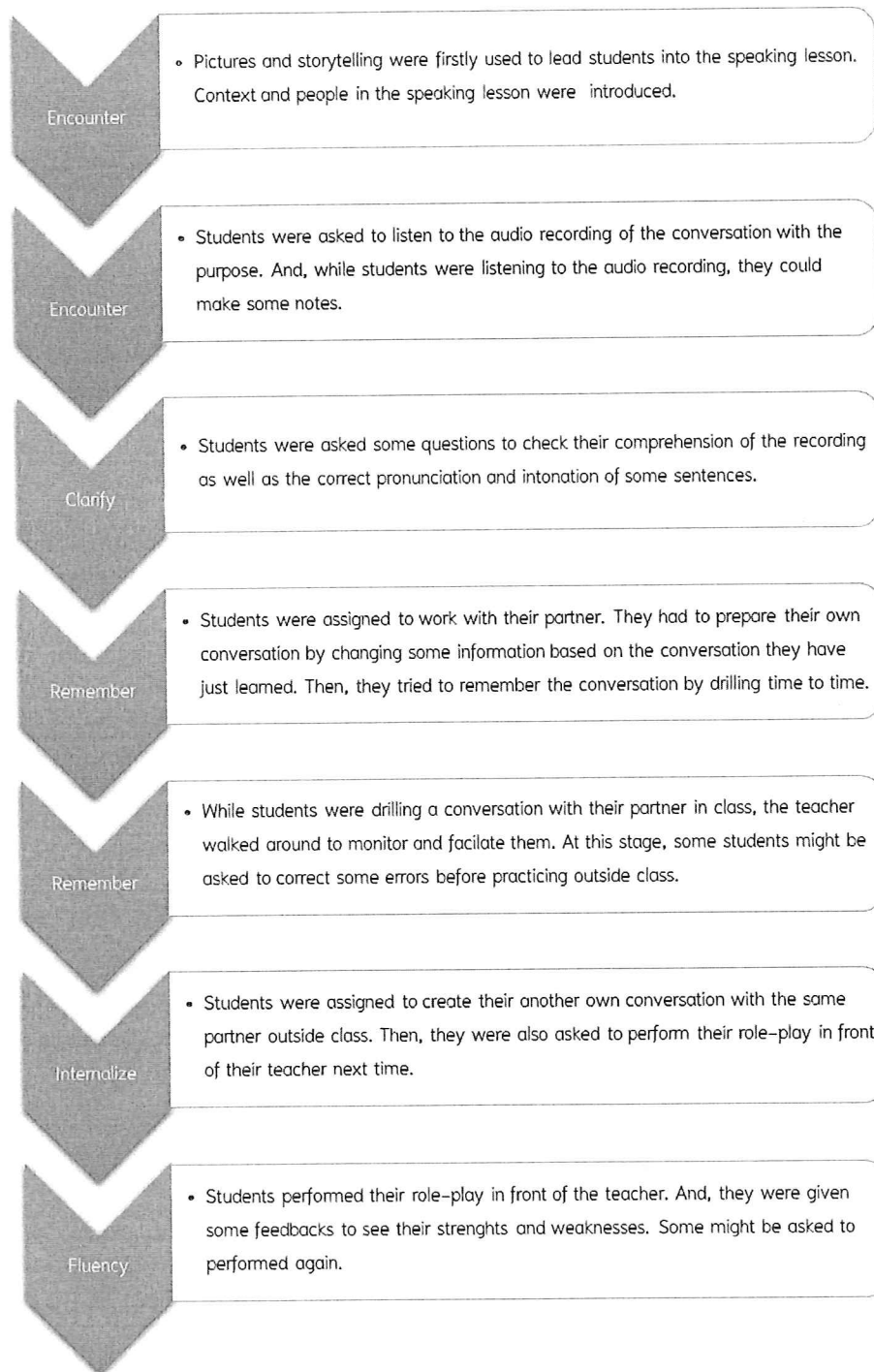|	• Pictures and storytelling were firstly used to lead students into the speaking lesson. Context and people in the speaking lesson were introduced.
Encounter	
Encounter	• Students were asked to listen to the audio recording of the conversation with the purpose. And, while students were listening to the audio recording, they could make some notes.
Clarify	• Students were asked some questions to check their comprehension of the recording as well as the correct pronunciation and intonation of some sentences.
Remember	• Students were assigned to work with their partner. They had to prepare their own conversation by changing some information based on the conversation they have just learned. Then, they tried to remember the conversation by drilling time to time.
Remember	• While students were drilling a conversation with their partner in class, the teacher walked around to monitor and facilate them. At this stage, some students might be asked to correct some errors before practicing outside class.
Internalize	• Students were assigned to create their another own conversation with the same partner outside class. Then, they were also asked to perform their role-play in front of their teacher next time.
Fluency	• Students performed their role-play in front of the teacher. And, they were given some feedbacks to see their strenghts and weaknesses. Some might be asked to performed again.

Figure 1 the model of getting unconfident students to speak up

5.2.1   Students' perception towards the two encounter stages

Seven students stated on the questionnaires that this stage should be proposed for their speaking lessons. It helped them to understand the conversation more easily. And, it helped them to pronounce words and sentences correctly. Other things which they have learned more from this stage are accent and intonation because they had chances to listen and imitate when practicing speaking. However, there were three students out of ten suggested that the audio recordings used in the lessons were sometimes too difficult because the speed was too fast. By this point, the difficulty of the audio recording should be realised more for the further lesson plans.

5.2.2 Students' perception towards the clarifying stage

At this stage, all students were appreciated to have their teacher as the facilitator. Explanations from their teacher were really needed and they mentioned that it was helpful for them to firstly understand the conversation well before adapting some language points by themselves.

5.2.3 Students' perception towards the two remembering stages

All ten students stated that drilling conversations with friends were good for them because they had chances to exchange knowledge together. And, getting some suggestions from their teacher while they were drilling with their partner was also very supportive for them. By these two things, it indicates that these students were enjoyable at drilling with their partner. However, they would be more confident to keep drilling if their teacher was there for them.

5.2.4 Students' perception towards two internalising stages

At the internalising stage, nine students agreed that this stage should be included in this teaching model. They mentioned that having enough time to prepare themselves before speaking and receiving feedback from teacher were helpful for them. It means allowing students to practice speaking with less control but still do monitoring made these students to feel better at speaking English. On the other hand, there was only one student mentioned that this stage should not be added in this model since he was too lazy to prepare himself and he was shy to speak up in front of his friend.

5.2.5 Students' perception towards the fluently use stages

At this stage, all ten students mentioned that this stage should be added in this model. It was the good chance for them to speak up by their own conversation. However, they still needed the feedback from their teacher. Then, they could use it to improve their English speaking. By these opinions, it indicates that allowing students to use language patterns from speaking lessons through the role-play activity works well with these students.

5.2.6 Students' perception towards the whole model

All ten students stated that this model is very helpful and friendly for them. It helped them to speak English more confidently. It means this model was done well for these students. However, there were some points should be revised which they mentioned in each stage. So, it would be considered again carefully for creating the further teaching model.

5.2.7 Students' perception towards their level of confidence about English speaking

On the questionnaire, students were also asked to rate themselves about their confidence at English speaking before and after studying English speaking by using this model. The results showed that the average score of their confidence about English speaking before studying English speaking by using this model was at 3.33 out of ten. Whereas the average score of the confidence about English speaking after studying English speaking by using this model was at 6 out of ten. These results imply that these students seemed to be more confident to speak English when they were asked to rate themselves focusing on the confidence about English speaking alone.

5.2.8 Students' comment for the further model to get unconfident students to speak up

Most students recommended that learning English speaking in various daily life contexts, vocabulary used in those contexts, and warm-up activities are three main things which the teacher should consider for these speaking lessons. These comments are the helpful guidelines for the researcher to include some additional things in the further teaching model to get this kind of students to speak up.

The results of this part had been already used as the guidelines for the researcher to write the recommended teaching model for the further speaking lessons.

5.3 The recommended model of getting unconfident to speak up

The recommended model of getting unconfident to speak up below was adapted by the original version which the researcher used in her class and the results of investigating students' perception towards that model. The encounter stage should be revised by considering about the difficulty of the recording used in the speaking lessons. And, pronunciation and intonation should be mainly focused

rather than the comprehension at the clarifying stage. And, the recommended model mentioned is presented below on the figure 2.

Encounter
- Pictures and storytelling were firstly used to lead students into the speaking lesson. Context and people in the speaking lesson were introduced.

Encounter
- Students were asked to listen to the audio recording of the conversation with the purpose. And, while students were listening to the audio recording, they could make some notes. * (The difficulty and speed of the recording should be revised)

Clarify
- Students were asked some questions to check their comprehension of the recording as well as the correct pronunciation and intonation of some sentences. *(Pronunciation and intonation should be mainly focused.)

Remember
- Students were assigned to work with their partner. They had to prepare their own conversation by changing some information based on the conversation they have just learned. Then, they tried to remember the conversation by drilling time to time.

Remember
- While students were drilling a conversation with their partner in class, the teacher walked around to monitor and facilate them. At this stage, some students might be asked to correct some errors before practicing outside class.

Internalize
- Students were assigned to create their another own conversation with the same partner outside class. Then, they were also asked to perform their role-play in front of their teacher next time.

Fluency
- Students performed their role-play in front of the teacher. And, they were given some feedbacks to see their strenghts and weaknesses. Some might be asked to performed again.
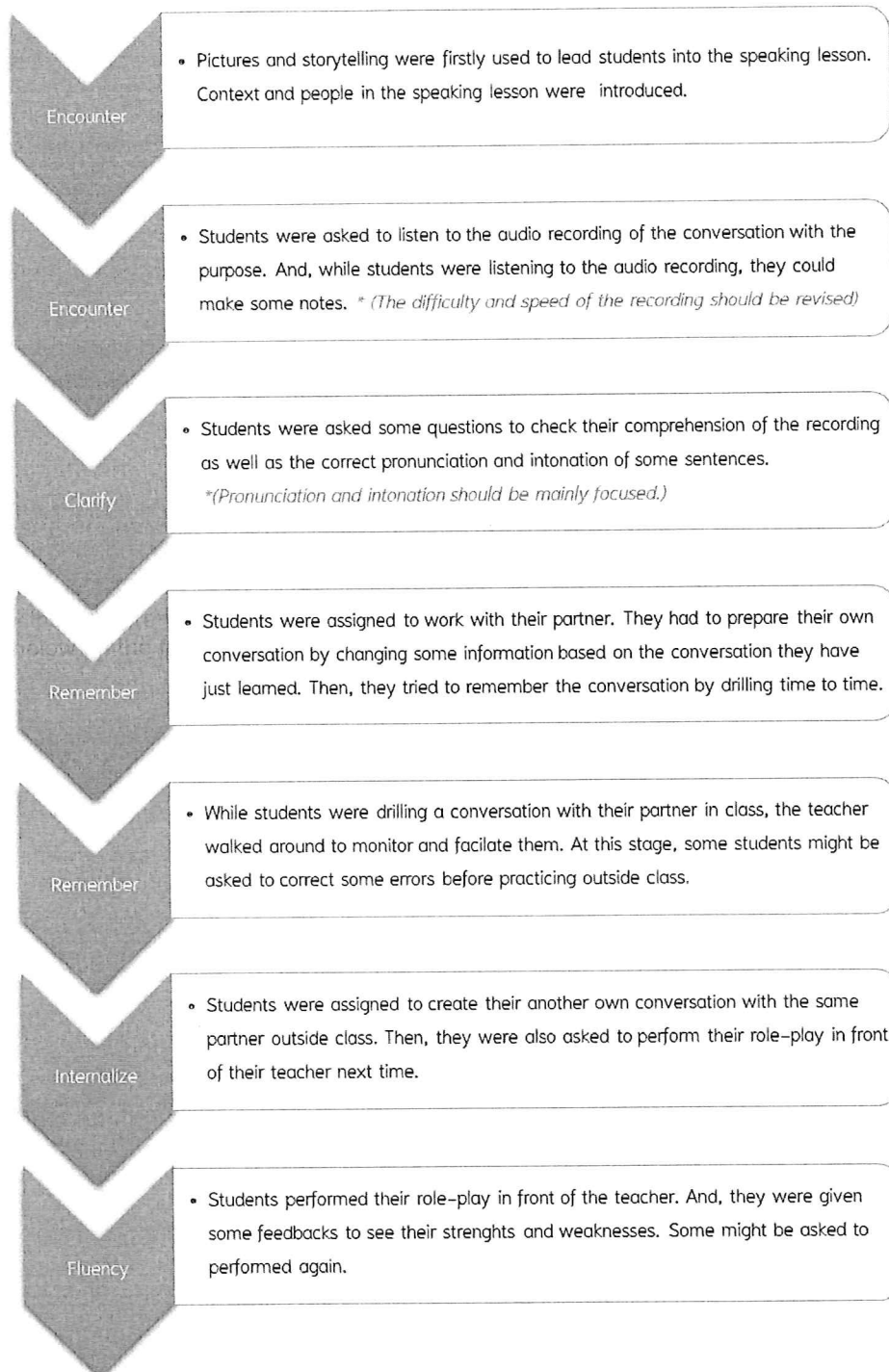
Figure 2 the recommended model of getting unconfident students to speak up

6 IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study brought some implications for teachers who are teaching speaking skills for both for general students and unconfident ones as follows;

- This study allowed the teacher to prepare lesson plans based on students' problem and needs. The focus group interview was employed at the first step of this study to search for the actual problems and then the data was applied for the researcher to design her lesson plans for her students.
- The model of getting unconfident students to speak up was adapted based on the ECRIF framework. And it worked well for these students, so this study would be one of the researches to highlight the use of this framework.
- The students' perception towards the teaching model used in this class was informative for the researcher in term of designing the further model for her students. And, it would be some guidelines for other teachers who also teach speaking skills and face the similar situation as her.

7 CONCLUSIONS

This research was inspired by some problems occurred along the English class of the researcher. The actual purpose of this study was just to help students to sort out their problems at English speaking. However, this study would not be completed without all ten students who used to find themselves as the unconfident students at English speaking and then they finally got themselves to go over that situation. They were the key men for this study since they have tried hard together with their teacher. Moreover, the researcher also found some noticeable things that studying students' obstacles, considering about the difficulty of tasks, allowing students to practice, giving enough time for them to internalise the new knowledge, and giving them chances to produce their fluency as well as giving them feedback are things that should be realised for this kind of the speaking class. And at the end of this study, some students also talked with the researcher personally that they felt like each speaking lesson of this course was very friendly and cooperative. This implies that the cooperativeness and positive environment in the classroom such speaking classes are also important for teaching these students to speak up.

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